DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 260 969 SO 016 749

TITLE	Bioregions and World Order.
INSTITUTION	Global Education Associates, East Orange, N.J.
PUB DATE	85
NOTE	28p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Global Education Association, 552 Park Ave., East Orange, NJ 07017 ($3.00; 10 or more, $2.00)
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
JOURNAL CIT	Breakthrough; spec iss v6 n3,4 Spr-Sum 1985
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Conservation (Environment); Ecology; Food; *Global Approach; Hunger; Resource Materials; Social Values; World Affairs; *World Problems
IDENTIFIERS	*Bioregions; *World Order

ABSTRACT

What bioregions can do to contribute to world order and security is discussed in this newsletter. A bioregion is defined as an identifiable geographical area of interacting life-systems that is relatively self-sustaining in the ever-renewing processes of nature. Articles included are: "Bioregionalism and World Order" (Gerald Mische); "Bioregions: The Context for Reinhabiting the Earth" (Thomas Berry); "Twelve Principles for Understanding the Universe and the Role of the Human in the Universe Process" (Thomas Berry); "Re-inhabiting Genesis Farm: A Center for Bioregional and World Order Education" (Miriam Therese MacGillis); "Maine: Working Together To Save the Soil" (Pauline Pare); "Kansas: An Evolving Vision for a Heartland Bioregional Community" (Betty Jean Goebel); "Green Thoughts...Reflections on the National Bioregional Congress and Green Politics" (Ron Hughes); "Green Politics: A Statement of Values"; "Ecological Politics and Bioregionalism" (David Haenke); "Appalachia and Bioregionalism" (Patrick Ronan); "World Conservation Strategy;" and "Bioregions: Where Person and Planet Meet" (Catherine Burton). Also included is a "Reader Exchange" containing thoughts of newsletter readers concerning bioregions and world security. The newsletter concludes with a bibliography on bioregionalism. (RM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Patricia M. Mische
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BREAKTHROUGH

A PUBLICATION OF GLOBAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATES

VOLUME 6, NOS. 3 and 4 SPRING/SUMMER 1985

ED260969

$3.00

If the Earth
were only a few feet
in diameter, floating a few
feet above a field somewhere,
people would come from everywhere
to marvel at it. People would walk around it,
marveling at its big pools of water, its little pools and the
water flowing between the pools. People would marvel at
deep rich soil on it, and they would marvel at the very
thin layer of gas surrounding it and the water suspended
in the gas. The people would marvel at the creatures walking
around the surface of the ball, and at the creatures in the water. The
people would declare it as sacred because it was the only one and they
would protect it so that it would not be hurt. The ball would be the
greatest wonder known, and people would come to pray to it,
to be healed, to gain knowledge, to know beauty and to
wonder how it could be. People would love it, and
defend it with their lives because they would
somehow know that their lives, their
own roundness, could be nothing
without it. If the
Earth were only a few
feet in diameter.

SP 016 749

Special Double Issue:

BIOREGIONS AND WORLD ORDER

CONTENTS

Cover graphic - Environmental Learning Center, Isabella, MN. Reproduced with permission.

Art - by Miriam Therese MacGillis & Martina Stegman

President's Letter 2

Bioregionalism Is 3

Bioregionalism and World Order
by Gerald Mische 4

Bioregions: The Context for Reinhabiting the Earth
by Thomas Berry 6

Twelve Principles for Understanding the Universe and the Role of the Human
by Thomas Berry 9

Reinhabiting Genesis Farm
by Miriam Therese MacGillis 10

Working Together To Save the Soil
by Louise Pare 14

An Evolving Vision for a Heartland Bioregional Community
by Betty Jean Goebel 15

Green Thoughts: Reflections on the National Bioregional Congress
by Ron Hughes 16

Green Politics: A Statement of Values 16

Ecological Politics and Bioregionalism
by David Haenke 18

Readers Exchange 19

Appalachia & Bioregionalism
by Patrick Ronan 22

The World Conservation Strategy 24

Where Person & Planet Meet
by Catherine Burton 25

Bibliography 26

Associate News 28

Religion and World Order 30

Franciscan Network 30

Copyright © 1985 by Global Education Associates. All rights reserved.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Associate,

"What is true security?" This question is at the core of the dialogue on Bioregionalism and World Order that is the focus of this issue of *Breakthrough*.

For this issue we invited over 250 associates who we know were involved in this theme or had checked *Land* or *Environment* on the "Special Interest Forms" that were sent to readers of *Breakthrough* last year. They were invited to share ideas, experiences, questions, articles, books, bibliographies and art work on the theme. The response was overwhelming. We want to thank the many people who responded. Unfortunately, limited space prevents us from publishing all of the valuable insights and materials that were received.

Tom Berry, an associate who has been an active participant in GEA's efforts for a more human world order for the past 10 years, provided the challenge for this bioregional dialogue. His presentations at our 1984 summer institute in Saint Paul emphasized the need to think of the "whole earth community" rather than merely of the human community.

We are being challenged to expand our worldview to see ourselves as only part of a larger community. Is the concept of the Whole Earth Community an impractical ideal? An inspiring, but "impossible dream?" Or is it a recognition based on utmost pragmatism — i.e., a recognition that *our relationship with the earth is the bottom line of personal, national and world security?*

Global Education Associates believes it is the latter. We invite your feedback and participation in what we hope will be an ongoing dialogue on the future that is still ours to shape.

Gerald Mische

Gerald Mische

GLOBAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATES

Global Education Associates is a network of men and women in over 50 countries who collaborate in research and educational programs, publish educational materials, and seek to catalyze a transcultural, multi-issue movement for a world order based on the values of social and economic justice, peace, ecological balance and participation in decision-making. Toward that end the Associates have conducted over 1000 workshops, institutes, and leadership seminars in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North and South America.

Publications

Breakthrough is a quarterly publication serving the Associates network. The **Whole Earth Papers** is a series of monographs and collections of articles dealing with global issues and alternative world futures. Back issues and bulk rates available. (See order form on inside back cover.)

Contributions and Inquiries

All who contribute $25.00 annually ($12.50 low income) receive Breakthrough and all Whole Earth Papers published that year. All contributions to Global Education Associates are tax deductible. *Address all contributions, inquiries, permission requests, orders, etc. to: Global Education Associates, 552 Park Ave., East Orange, NJ, 07017. (201) 675-1409.*

Trustees:

Chris Borgen, Richard Chartier, James Donahue, Michael J. Feeley, Benjamin B. Ferencz, Bishop Joseph Francis, SVD, Charles Guettel, Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat, Rev. Paul Lauby, Miriam Therese MacGillis OP, Alan McCoy OFM, Gerald F. Mische, Patricia M. Mische, Lourdes Quisumbing, Rev. John Radano, Rev. Paul Stagg, Dr. Masao Takanaka, Barbara Lawler Thomas, SCN, August Vanistendael, Burns H. Weston.

A Bioregion is...

A bioregion is an identifiable geographical area of interacting life-systems that is relatively self-sustaining in the ever-renewing processes of nature. The full diversity of life functions is carried out, not as individuals or as species, or even as organic beings, but as a community that includes the physical as well as the organic components of the region.

Thomas Berry

Bioregionalism is an age-old way of viewing the world. Regions are not delineated by imaginary, straight lines as scribed by humans, but by the climate and land forms which make that part of the planet uniquely distinct. Local life-forms, cultures, traditions and hopes for the future reflect that particular place on the planet in which they're rooted.

Bioregionalism interprets the world through a variety of regional value systems which reflect the parameters of the regions from which they are born. These value systems cannot be superficially based on prejudices and presumptions but must be fitted to the ecology of their place.

Ron Hughes

To become "dwellers in the land," to regain the spirit of the Greeks, to fully and honestly come to know the earth, the crucial and perhaps only and all encompassing task is to understand the place, the immediate, specific place, where we live: "In the question of how we treat the land," as Schumacher says, "our entire way of life is involved." We must somehow live as close to it as possible, be in touch with its particular soils, its waters, its winds, we must learn its ways, its capacities, its limits, we must make its rhythms our patterns, its laws our guide, its fruits our bounty.

That, in essence, is bioregionalism. A bioregion is part of the earth's surface whose rough boundaries are determined by natural rather than human dictates, distinguishable from other areas by attributes of flora, fauna, water, climate, soils, and land forms, and the human settlements and cultures those attributes have given rise to.

Kirkpatrick Sales

BIOREGIONALISM AND WORLD ORDER

by Gerald Mische
President of Global Education Associates

The nation-state is *too large* a unit to solve some problems; and *too small* to solve others. Bioregionalism is a response to the too-largeness. World order initiatives are a response to the too-smallness.

Some bioregionalists recognize only the too-largeness of the nation-state. Accordingly, their goals and strategies focus only on small-scale local responses to problems. They assume that a reorganization of the world's political and economic systems according to bioregions is the key to resolving all of today's major problems.

Some world order advocates recognize only the too-smallness of the nation-state system. Accordingly, their goals and strategies focus too exclusively on global scale responses to problems. Their assumption is that the solution to all problems will flow from the establishment of global institutions.

It is not a question of either-or. Nor should one get priority over the other. Both approaches are needed at the same time.

Many survival threats that bioregionalists and world order advocates identify have roots *not* in the nation-state itself, but in the *absoluteness* of the concept of territorial sovereignty upon which the nation-state system is based. Centralization of power and decision-making in the hands of of a few isolated elites — as well as capital-intensive technology and large-scale corporate economic goals — are not inherent in the concept of the national state. Rather, they have deep roots in the security imperatives that flow from the structure of our present nation-state system.

The nation-state grew out of a particular historical context 400 years ago. Although it did place the locus of some decision-making further away from local communities, it also brought significant improvements to many peoples and regions. It provided a structure for managing conflicts and curbing violence among feudal groups. It established a framework for institutionalizing basic human rights and sought to control the power of elites. At its best its laws and institutions have faciliated democratic processes among people who previously had had little control over decisions that affected their lives.

No nation-state, of course, has fully embodied these values. And many have a very long way to go. A variety of factors have slowed progress toward justice and participation in decision-making within many states. They include greed, lust for power, ideology, racism, and religion. But the most universal and constant restraint on continued progress toward peace, justice and participation in decision-making has been three security imperatives that are inherent in the principle of unlimited national sovereignty:

These problems are not resolvable by single nation-state approaches. Nor can they be resolved by bio-regional approaches alone.

---

international competition over weapons, balance-of-payments, and scarce resources. These three security goals often comprise a structural straitjacket on human-scaled, life-respecting priorities.

For many countries, the greatest security threat does not come from the possibility of external military attack. It comes, rather, from the the latter two security concerns. Indeed, the escalation of the arms race has direct — though not exclusive — roots in competition over access to scarce resources and over the export markets needed for acquiring the precious foreign currency required to offset chronic balance-of-payments deficts. In an increasingly interdependent world, these problems are not resolvable by single nation-state approaches. Nor can they be resolved by bioregional approaches alone. Without international public sector instutitions that can provide a structural framework for resolving these problems which touch the core of a nation's security, national leaders find themselves increasingly powerless to give prioirty to the "small is beautiful" models that bioregionalists rightly embrace as important to human-scaled development.

Given the lawlessness of the international arena, even national leaders who embrace human-scaled development find themselves increasingly compelled to operate out of a power-paradigm and elite decision-making model. Priority is given to those capital-intensive industries and to alliances with the bankers, technicians and economic and military elites whose partnership is required to survive international competition for military and economic security. Excluded from the criteria used for public policy are decentralized, participatory, social justice and ecologically responsible values.

This security straitjacket transcends ideological and economic differences. Leaders of all nations — capitalist or socialist, rich or poor — experience its structural powerlessness.

How does this straitjacket relate to bioregional concerns? An immediate relationship is its devastating affect on land. In the U.S. the debate is over the loss of the "family farm". And in most "Third World" countries, the struggle over "who owns the land" is escalating into armed conflict as pressures from peasant farmers for land reform are resisted by owners of large tracts of land. Often missing in these debates and struggles, however, is an adequate understanding of how much the national-security-straitjacket is a prime obstacle to the goals of preserving the family farm and land reform. Within the structure of the present nation-state system, land and food have become logical instruments of national-security goals. And agribusiness has become a logical partner of the national security establishment for achieving these goals.

Saying that these policies are "logical" is not to say that they are morally correct. Nor is it to condone the use of land and food as national security instruments. Such policies have long range dangers for the planet and its peoples.

BUT, we cannot merely *denounce*. We cannot merely wage a rear guard action *against* capital-intensive, corporate systems. We must recognize the structural dilemmas that national leaders face in today's interdependent, but lawless, world economy. And building upon this recognization, we must "announce" world order alternatives capable of providing monetary and resource security. We must also develop practical strategies for advancing the international public-sector structures needed to resolve the security dilemmas.

Consider, for example, the interrelated crises of food, hunger, environment and land ownership. A major factor underlying each of these crises is that the exportation of agricultural products has become a prime means of dealing with chronic trade and balance-of-payments deficits. Such trade and payments deficits are a national security problem in that they threaten a nation's currency, undermine its ability to compete in international trade and erode the domestic foundations of its economy. Because agribusiness can mobilize the capital-intensive mechinization, large economies-of-scale and international logistical support needed to facilitate such exports, its environmentally and socially destructive characteristics are tolerated by the National-Security-State.

Simply, but accurately, put: *Today, land and food have become primary national security instruments* — the public attention given to military expenditures not-withstanding.

Land and Food Crises and the Global Debt Crisis

Providing a dramatic example of the need for international public sector institutions to overcome this straitjacket on land, food and "small is beautiful" economic models is the *international debt crisis* — a time bomb of $970 trillion in outstanding foreign loans by Third World and Eastern European countries, most of which may never be repaid.

The band-aid correctives that have been applied to this debt bomb have merely temporarily obscured the danger of global monetary and economic catastrophe. Brazil and Argentina are once again back on the critical list. Default on their loans could trigger international monetary and economic collapse. Many smaller Third World countries are already economic, social and political basket-cases because of unpayable debt obligations. And in the United States, the 1985 trade deficit is expected to pass $140 billion (up from $40 billion in 1982). Caught in this "balance-of-payments" straitjacket — and lacking effective international institutions to manage the global dimensions of these crises — national leaders have been mobilizing their country's economies for the export sector rather than for the basic needs of its citizens.

Losers in this export orientation include the family farm, soil conservation, environmental protection, labor-intensive/capital-saving industries and local control. Winners include agribusiness; hi-tech, capital-intensive/labor-saving industries; corporate merger specialists; international banks; and large multi-national conglomerates — all capable of competing in in the unregulated international marketplace.

It is a mistake to blame this loss of local control soley on capitalism. Confronted by the security imperatives of our present nation-state systems, socialist countries follow similar corporate models. Within capitalist societies, security-related elite decision-making is pursued within the context of a relatively free market. In socialist societies, it is pursued within a government-controlled market. Admittedly, there are major differences between capitalist and socialist countries. But what both have in common is that decentralized and bioregional models are subordinated to the aggregate power needed for economic, monetary and resource security in the arena of the unregulated global market place.

Which brings us back to our beginning reflection: "The nation-state is too large a unit to solve some problems: and too small to solve others." Bioregionalism is a necessary response to the too-largness. And initiatives to conitruct world order structures to provide a framework for disarmament, for resolving the international debt crises and for providing equitable and assured access to the worlds scarce resources is a necessary response to the too-smallness.

Rather than abandoning the principle of national sovereignty, our challenge is to redefine sovereignty.

So the task before us is not to turn back to the past. We need not dismantle or by-pass the nation-state. The need, instead, is to recognize that the concept of *unlimited* national sovereignty does not represent a *final* vision. As presently constituted, this concept does not represent the culmination of historical political development. It reflects, rather, an *interim stage* of human history.

We need to recognize — and overcome — the *structural gap* that exists. Political institutions have not kept pace with the explosive growth in global interdependence of the past several decades. National institutions are not only unable to manage many of the new crises that are global in nature. They are also unable to take advantage of the exciting new opportunities that global interdependence is opening up for developing a more just, human and environmentally viable world.

Rather than abandoning the principle of national sovereignty, our challenge is to *redefine* sovereignty. Recognizing the breakdown of territorial soverignty — as illustrated by the inability of national institutions to handle the international debt crisis — we must redefine national security in terms of *world* security. And we must develop the international legal structures needed to deal with those forces and crises that are too large for national institutions. With such *functional* public sectors at a global level, the thrust toward centralized and isolated elite decision-making can be reversed. Out of such a world order framework, more decentralized economic models can be embraced and implemented.

It is here that bioregionalism and world order come together. *World order begins both with the local and with the global.* ■

BIOREGIONS: THE CONTEXT FOR REINHABITING THE EARTH

by Thomas Berry

Tom Berry is director of the Riverdale Center for Religious Studies. He is a frequent contributor to Breakthrough and the Whole Earth Papers.

The earth presents itself to us not as a uniform global reality, but as a complex of highly differentiated regions caught up in the comprehensive unity of the planet itself.

There are arctic and tropical, coastal and inland regions, mountains and plains, river valleys and deserts. Each of these has its distinctive geological formation, climactic conditions, and living forms. Together these constitute the wide variety of life communities that may be referred to as bioregions. Each is coherent within itself and intimately related to the others. Together they express the wonder and splendor of this garden planet of the universe.

The universe expresses itself in the blazing radiance of the stars and in the vast reaches of the galactic systems, but its most intimate expression of itself is in this tiny planet. In turn, this unique planet could not exist in its present form except in a universe such as that in which it has emerged and from which it has received its life energies.

The human species has emerged within this complex of multiple life communities. It has survived and developed through participation in the functioning of these communities at their most basic level. Out of this interaction has come our distinctive human cultures.

At an early period humans were acutely aware of their dependence on the integral functioning of these surrounding communities, but this awareness faded as humans, through their scientific and technological skills, learned to manipulate the community functioning to their own advantage. This has brought about a disruption of the entire complex of life systems. The florescence that distinguished these communities in the past is now severely diminished. A degradation of the entire natural world has taken place.

Even though humans as well as the other higher species are in a stressful situation, few of us are aware of the order of magnitude of what is happening. Fewer still have any adequate understanding of its causes or the steps needed to initiate any effective program for the revitalization of these communities upon which everything depends.

Disruption of the life process of the whole earth community has led also to disruption of the more circumscribed *human* community itself. If a consciousness of social turmoil and international rivalries has evoked significant concern, a consciousness of the disruption of earth's life systems remains only a vague awareness in the human mind. This is strange indeed when we consider that the disruption of our bioregional communities is leading to a poisoning of the air we breathe, the water we drink, the soil and the seas that provide our food.

We often seek to remedy our social ills by employment in industrial processes that only lead to further ecological devastation. Indeed our sensitivity to human conflict over the sharing of earth's resources has distracted us from the imperilled condition of these resources themselves, a peril associated with the loss of topsoil, the destruction of forests, the desertification of fruitful areas, the elimination of wetlands and spawning areas, the exhaustion of aquifers, the salinization of irrigated areas, the damaging of coral reefs.

The urgency for a remedy for this situation is such that all social groups and all nations are called upon to reassess the entire human-earth situation. As was first indicated by Edward Schumacher, we must rethink our industrial approach to "development." This rethinking involves not only appropriate technologies, but also appropriate life styles; and beyond these, appropriate human-earth relations.

The most difficult transition to make is from a *homo-centric* norm of progress to a *bio-centric* norm of progress. The entire life community must progress. Any progress of the human at the expense of the larger community of the living must ultimately lead to a diminishment of human life itself. A degraded habitat will produce degraded humans; an enhanced habitat contributes to an elevated mode of the human.

This is evident not only in the economic order but throughout the entire range of human affairs. We need only consider what the desolation of human imagination would be if its only outer experience were of the lunar landscape. The splendor of earth in the variety of its land and its seas, its life forms and its atmospheric phenomena; these constitute in color and sound and movement that great symphonic context that has inspired our sense of the divine, given us our emotional and imaginative powers, and evoked from us those entrancing insights that have governed our most sublime moments.

This symphonic context not only activates our interior faculties; it also provides our physical nourishment. The air and water and soil and seeds that provide our basic sustenance, the sunshine that pours its energies over the landscape; these are integral with the functioning of the fruitful earth. Physically and spiritually we are woven into this living process. As long as the integrity of the whole earth process is preserved, we have air to breathe and water to drink and nourishing food to eat.

The difficulty has come from our subversion of this integral life community for our own advantage. We have torn apart the fabric itself. We have developed technologies that do not function in harmony with earth technologies. We force the soil with chemicals to produce beyond its natural life rhythms. Having lost our ability to invoke natural forces, we seek by violence to impose upon these forces. In consequence of such actions, we now live in a world of declining fertility, a wasted world, a world in which its purity and life-giving qualities have been dissipated.

The solution is simply that we join the earth community as a participating member, that we foster the progress and prosperity of the bioregional communities to which we belong.

Here we note that *a bioregion is an identifiable geographical area of interacting life systems that is relatively self-sustaining in the ever-renewing processes of nature. The full diversity of life functions is carried out, not as individuals or as species, or even as organic beings, but as a community that includes the physical as well as the organic components of the region.*

Such a bioregional community is self-propagating, self- nourishing, self-educating, self-governing, self-healing and self-fulfilling. Each of the component life systems must integrate their own functioning within this community functioning to survive in any effective manner.

SIX FUNCTIONS

Within this perspective the human can be identified as *that being in whom the community reflects on and celebrates itself in conscious self-awareness.* Yet this distinctive role of the human requires our appreciation of the full range of the community life processes.

The solution is simply that we join the earth community as a participating member.

Self-propagating

The first function, *self-propagation,* requires that we recognize the rights of each species to its habitat, to its migratory routes, to its place in the community. The bioregion is the domestic setting of the community just as the home is the domestic setting of the family. The community continues itself through successive generations precisely as a community. Both in terms of species and in terms of numbers, a certain balance must be maintained.

Self-nourishing

The second bio-regional function, *self-nourishing,* requires that the members of the community nourish each other in the established patterns of the natural world for the well-being of the entire community and each of its members. Within this pattern the expansion of each species is limited by opposed life forms or conditions so that no one life form or group of life forms should overwhelm the others. In this functioning of the community we include, for humans, the entire world of food gathering, of agriculture, of commerce and of economics. The various bioregional communities of the national world can be considered as commercial ventures as well as biological processes. There is the constant interchange of values, the laying up of capital, the quest for more economical ways of doing things. The earth is our best model for any commercial venture. It carries out its operations with an economy and a productivity far beyond that of human institutions. It also runs its system with a minimum of entropy. There is in nature none of that sterile or toxic

waste or non-decomposing litter such as is made by humans.

Self-education

The third function of a bioregion is its *self-education* through physical, chemical, biological and cultural patterning. Each of these requires the others for its existence and fulfillment. The entire evolutionary process can be considered as a most remarkable feat of self-education on the part of the planet earth and of its distinctive bioregional units. An important aspect of this self-educational process is the experiential mode of its procedures. The earth and each of its bio-regions has performed unnumbered billions of experiments in designing the existing life system. Thus the self-educational processes observed in the natural world form a model for the human. There is presently no other way for humans to educate themselves for either survival or fulfillment than through the instruction available to them through the natural world.

Self-governance

The fourth function of a bioregion is *self-governance*. An integral functional order exists within every regional life community. This order is not an extrinsic imposition but an interior bonding of the community that enables each of its members to participate in the governance and to achieve that fullness of life expression that is proper to each. This governance is presided over in much of the world by the seasonal sequence of life expression. It provides the order in which the florescence and exuberant renewal of life takes place. Humans have traditionally inserted themselves into this community process through their ritual celebrations. These are not simply human activities but expressions of the entire participating community. In human deliberations each of the various members of the community should be represented.

Self-healing

The fifth function of the bioregional community is *self-healing*. The community carries within itself not only the nourishing energies that are needed by each member of the community; it also contains within itself the special powers of regeneration. This takes place when forests are damaged by the great storms or when periods of drought wither the fields or when locusts swarm over a region and leave it desolate. In all these instances the life community adjusts itself, reaches deeper into its recuperative powers and brings about a healing. This is done whether the damage is to a single individual or to an entire area of the community. Humans too find that their healing takes place through submission to the discipline of the community and partaking of its nourishing and healing powers.

Self-fulfilling

The sixth function of these life communities is found in its *self-fulfilling activities*. The community is fulfilled in each of its components, in the flowering fields, in the great oak trees, in the flight of the sparrow, in the surfacing whale, or in any of the other expressions of the natural world. Then there

are the seasonal modes of community fulfillment, the mysterious springtime renewal. In conscious celebration of the numinous mystery of the universe expressed in the unique qualities of each regional community, the human fulfills its own special role; for in the human the community celebrates itself in a reflexive self-awareness. This is attained through its human component in liturgies, in music and dance, in song and poetry, in literature and drama, in painting, sculpture and architecture.

After reviewing these various functions of bioregional communities, it is necessary to add that the *primary role of the human can be identified only within this context*, and that the future of the human lies in acceptance and fulfillment of this role in all six of these community functions. The change indicated is the change from an exploitive homocentrism to a participating biocentrism.

This is something *beyond environmentalism* which remains homocentric while trying to limit the deleterious effects of human presence on the environment. Ultimately, this concern is for human benefit rather than for the well-being of the community.

RETHINKING SOVEREIGNTY

We have limited our discussion so far to the inner functioning of the regional communities because these provide the most immediate basis of survival. If these communities do not fulfill their most essential functions, then the larger complex of bio-regions cannot fulfill its role.

Each of these bioregions is, as we have noted, *relatively* self-sustaining, *none are fully self-sustaining!*

The air and water flow across the entire planet and all its regions. So with the animals. Some of these range widely from one end of a continent to another. Birds cross multiple bioregional and continental boundaries. Eventually all bioregions are *inter-dependent* in some degree. This inter-dependence is presently accentuated by the toxic waste poured into the environment by our industrial society. Such toxic materials are borne across entire continents and even across the entire planet by water and air. Such an obtrusive continental remedy would, of course, not be needed if the various bioregions each functioned properly within its own context.

The larger functioning of bioregions leads to a consideration that the earth be viewed primarily as an inter-related system of bioregions and only secondarily as a community of nations.

The more massive bureaucratic nations of the world have lost their inner vitality because they can no longer respond to the particular functioning of the various bioregions within their borders. A second difficulty within the massive nations is the exploitation of some bioregions for the advantage of others. A third difficulty is the threatened devastation of the entire planet by the conflict of massive bureaucratic nations with their weaponry capable of continental and even planetary devastation. To break these nations down into their appropriate bioregional communities could be a possible way to peace.

This bioregional mode of thinking and acting is presently one of the most

vigorous movements taking place anywhere on the North American continent. Its comprehensive concern is leading toward a reordering of all our existing establishments: the political-legal, the commercial-industrial, communications, educational and religious establishments. All of these are sharing in the devastating impact of industrial society on the natural world. The human arrogance they manifest toward the other members of these life communities remains only slightly affected by the forebodings concerning the future expressed by professional biologists and by others who have recognized that the imminent peril to the planet is not only the nuclear bomb, but also the plundering processes that are doing so much to extinguish these very life systems on which we depend.

Yet the number of those speaking and acting and leading others in programs of reinhabiting the earth in a more benign relationship with the other members of these natural communities is growing constantly. This movement — often referred to as the Green Movement — is fostering an ecological or bioregional context for every aspect of life, for education, economics, government, healing and religion. So far the movement remains a pervasive and growing mode of consciousness that is groping toward a more precise articulation of its own ideals, of its institutional form and its most effective programs of action.

Of primary importance is the need to identify the various bioregions of the world. To do this requires a sensitivity akin to that of the shamanic personality of tribal peoples. While bioregions have certain geographic boundaries, they also have certain mythic, mystical and historical modes of self-identification. Even this identification depends also on ourselves as we participate in this process which has been suppressed ever since the European peoples invaded the continent.

Much more could be added here to indicate just what has been achieved so far; yet this must suffice for the present. It is only a beginning statement of the rising transformation of the planet as the bioregions of the earth begin once more to assert themselves. ■

Twelve Principles for Understanding the Universe and the Role of the Human in the Universe Process

1. The universe, the solar system, and the planet earth in themselves and in their evolutionary emergence constitute for the human community the primary revelation of that ultimate mystery whence all things emerge into being.
2. The universe is a unity, an interacting and genetically related community of beings bound together in an inseparable relationship in space and time. The unity of the planet earth is especially clear: each being of the planet is profoundly implicated in the existence and functioning of every other being of the planet.
3. From its beginning, the universe is a psychic as well as a physical reality.
4. The three basic laws of the universe at all levels of reality are differentiation, subjectivity, and communion.
5. The human is that being in whom the universe attains reflexive consciousness of itself.
6. The earth, within the solar system, is a self- emergent, self-nourishing, self-educating, self-governing, self-healing, self-fulfilling community. All particular life systems in their being, their nourishment, their education, their governing, their healing, their fulfillment must integrate their functioning within this larger complex of mutually dependent earth systems.
7. The genetic coding process is the process through which the world of the living evolves, educates, and rules itself. The great wonder is the creative interaction of the multiple codings among themselves.
8. At the human level, genetic coding mandates a further trans-genetic cultural coding by which specifically human qualities find expression. Cultural coding is carried on by educational processes.
9. The emergent process of the universe is irreversible and non-repeatable in the existing world order. The movement from non-life to life on the planet earth is a one-time event. So, too, the movement from life to the human form of consciousness. The movement from the simpler to the more complex cultural forms is also, most likely, irreversible on the larger time scale.
10. The historical sequence of cultural periods can be identified as the tribal-shamanic period, the classical civilizational period of the great religious cultures, the scientific-technological period, and the ecological period.
11. The main human task of the immediate future is to assist in activating the intercommunion of all the living and non-living components of the earth community in what can be considered the emerging ecological period of earth development.
12. Functionally, the great art of achieving this historical goal is the art of intimacy and distance, the capacity of being to be totally present to each other while further affirming and enhancing the differences and identities of each.

by Thomas Berry

RE-INHABITING GENESIS FARM:

A Center For Bioregional and World Order Education

by Miriam Therese MacGillis

Miriam Therese MacGillis, O.P. is a trustee of Global Education Associates, an artist, speaker, and farmer. In 1980 she founded Genesis Farm, a collaborative project of the Caldwell Dominicans and Global Education Associates.

Minsi, Minasinniu: "People of the Stony Country." Three hundred years ago they inhabited this lush province of the Kitatinny Valley and Ridge that rims the northwestern border of New Jersey — a sub-region of the great Appalachian Valley and Ridge that pushes its way from the southern United States to the St. Lawrence Valley in Canada.

Atop the highest hill behind our barn, I can gaze across the ancestral lands of the Minsi. For at least 7,000 years this valley and the Delaware River flowing through it was their home. The river and the people shared an intimate bond and history.

Our farm is one of many that now dominate this gently rolling valley. The Minsi are gone. They were peaceful. Hunting and gathering, planting and hoeing, they satisfied their needs while living in attunement to the natural world. They sought spiritual fulfillment through a close kinship with Manitowuk, whose presence infused these woodlands.

The stony country shaped a way of life for the original people. It is beginning to shape mine. Genesis. Beginning.

Linking Bioregionalism and World Order

This article is written as a companion to the article by Thomas Berry in this issue of *Breakthrough*. Gratefully I express my connectedness and indebtedness to his work, and through him to the bioregional movement. Both have a significant influence in the direction of Genesis Farm as it links with the inner and outer dimensions of world order.

Genesis is a farm and a reflection center. It is also an experiment in "re-inhabiting" these 140 acres in the Delaware Valley. It is a center where the search for alternative global systems, global spirituality, simplicity of life, land stewardship and sustainable, ecological agriculture all come together.

My association with Global Education Associates goes back eleven years. The analysis and strategies contained in *Toward A Human World Order* by Gerald and Patricia Mische are the framework for my efforts in peace and justice education. It was this framework, especially as it related to hunger, that led me to focus on food and land.

Ten years later the Mische analysis is more relevant than ever. The crisis of hunger and human suffering has worsened. The plight of farmers here and around the planet has intensified. Land ownership has become more centralized. Ecological concerns have been trivialized. These remain tragic symptoms of the national-security straitjacket.

They also are symptomatic of the lack of an adequate *cosmology*. Western education, law, religion, economics, and medicine are rooted in

an assumption that humans are somehow separate from, different than, and unconnected to the earth and its evolutionary journey in the cosmos. This erroneous premise must now be transformed by the realization that humans are a continuation of and intimately connected to deeper earth processes.

As I re-inhabit this particular place, I experience its connectedness to the inner and outer reaches of the whole earth.

An authentic, human-scaled world order must be developed in both its inner and outer dimension and in its local and global parameters. It is to these tough issues that Genesis Farm is committed.

In 1979, My Dominican congregation inherited this farm from a family with no prior affiliation to us. The mystery of that gratuitous event continues to evoke in us a deeper understanding of trusteeship and of the responsibility we share for the fate of the earth. In 1980, in collaboration with Global Education Associates, Genesis Farm began as a fledgling experiment in earth stewardship.

In the past five years we have struggled to survive, to learn, to be faithful. In the same five years the North American bioregional movement has emerged. The networks have linked and expanded. The resources have developed and multiplied. For us, this movement has offered viable models, practical plans, and concrete tools for applying the philosophical insights in Thomas Berry's work.

How often we hear: "Think globally; act locally." This sense of *local*--of a real physical, defined place--is the core of bioregionalism. As my study of the universe and its evolutionary journey has deepened, so has my awareness of the particular geological and biological history of this place. As I re-inhabit this particular place, I experience its connectedness to the inner and outer reaches of the whole earth.

The Kittatinny Valley and Ridge of the Upper Delaware

A succession of geological processes molding the earth's crust has shaped the particular landscape of this bioregion. Over a billion years ago, after the massive waves of eruptions within the planet began to cool down, the eastern coast of North America slowly tore away from the African and European continents to which it once was joined. Millions of years later, with the gradual closing of the Atlantic Basin, these continents collided again, forming the massive folds and faults of the Great Appalachian Chain that now lines the eastern coast of North America. About 2 million years ago the same region was raised above sea level and exposed to the modifying influences of water, weathering, and erosion. Several times between then and now, the entire region was reduced to sea level and then uplifted again, constantly changed by the powerful forces at work.

In the most recent geological era a series of ice sheets glaciated this region, advancing and retreating. The remains of earlier communities of plants and animals lie encrusted in the deeper strata of our present landscape. As the last ice sheet (some 2,500 to 3,000 feet in thickness) receded from New Jersey about ten to fifteen thousand years ago, the landscape assumed the major features we see today. Centuries of winds and waters continue to modify it.

From the last ice age until the present, a succession of living communities established themselves here, adapting to warming and cooling trends, to geologic and soil features, and to the diversity among themselves. Plants, insects and animals learned to form a viable, sustainable, community: an eco-system. The long process of biological emergence assured the balanced interaction of the whole, so that the earliest humans to arrive here inserted themselves into a lush and splendid community of life. The region was alive and well. The Minsi learned to live at one with it.

It is into these ever-renewing processes — already enormously altered in the last hundred years without the living wisdom of native elders — that Genesis Farm is now learning to function.

Six Life-Functions

Tom Berry describes a bioregional community as

> an identifiable geographic area of interacting life systems that is relatively self-sustaining in the ever-renewing process of nature. The full diversity of life-functions is carried out, not as individual or species, or even as organic beings, but as a community that includes the physical as well as organic components of the region. Such a bioregional community is self- propagating, self-nourishing, self-educating, self-governing, self-healing and self-fulfilling.

Each of these six life-functions is evident in the life processes of Genesis Farm.

Self-Propagating

Gazing over our fields and woodlots, one could feel secure in the abundance of new vegetation constantly replenishing the old. But the basis of the *evident* signs of life and generativity lie in a hidden strata of microscopic scale and monumental significance: *the living universe of the soil.* I am just slowly beginning to understand how the *geological* history of this place has determined the parameters and potentiality for the appropriate life species which have evolved here.

The Soil Conservation Service has provided us with a soil map that grids the diversity of terrain, organic composition and water conditions for our entire acreage. To grasp these differences is to journey into the geological processes described above. The pasture lands, the swamp areas, the forests and cultivated fields each have a unique history and definition. And each of these areas, covered with a garment of living soil, contain a unique

and teeming population, an indispensable, extraordinary community of microscopic organisms. Billions of algae, bacteria, fungi and actinomycetes are the *primary* inhabitants of this place. Everything else that lives and grows here is totally dependent on them and their capacity for self-propagation. Should they disappear, wind and water would quickly erode the fragile skin of soil. The world of green and growing things would shrivel up. The insects, birds and animals would disappear.

Haunting images of starving people fill the evening news, but starving nations continue to give their most fertile land to cash crops planted for export in order to solve their acute balance-of-payment deficits. On any summer day in my own region, supermarkets are stacked with vegetables and fruit from California, Mexico and Central America. Current world trends reflect a more and more centralized food system. The actual nutritive value of food is diminishing and its appearance is being propped up by cosmetic chemicals. This state of affairs is absurd and violent. Together the world order movement and the bioregional movement could reverse these trends.

Self-Educating

Thomas Berry says that "to garden is to activate the deepest mysteries of the universe." The process of gardening is an invitation into the journey of the cosmos as it unfolds and reveals itself in a cauliflower. To enter into the *interior* spaces of the natural world is to be confronted with our own arrogance. We must disarm ourselves of so many of our attitudes of dominance or of indifference if we are to discover the Divine.

A garden is a school. A kitchen, rooted in a garden, governed by the seasons and their appropriate foods, is a school. Learning to become such a school is a process of re-education and discovery.

Work, too, is learning. As we continue to work and learn, our workshops will become more integral, more reflective of the self-education that is happening in and through us. As we link our understanding of local and global we may offer a space where such questions and issues will engage the people who come here with hope and encouragement. Such a learning will force us to sustain both the overwhelming complexities of the global scale and the most intricate details of the local scale. We will need to be contemplatives — at work.

As a farmer, a participant in the food producing cycle, I must learn and revere the wisdom of this process.

Self-Nourishing

Several months ago I experienced a moment of profound awareness in a very simple act. The day was cold, the kitchen warm and silent. I was alone, enjoying a steaming bowl of vegetarian chili, extremely conscious of its flavors and textures. It occurred to me that this bowl really held rock and soil, minerals and water, and the energy and heat of the stars. All of the ingredients — the beans, onions, garlic, carrots, tomatoes, basil, pepper and oregano — had once been *seeds* that I inserted into soil.

Now they were all providing me with delight and nourishment. And they would soon become my blood, my bones, my sight, my movement, my thoughts, my prayers. I was overwhelmed by the limitless generosity of the universe and its Creator. It was *gospel* and *eucharist* in a sacrament so simple, so holy, my heart brimmed with gratitude.

Today, fewer and fewer bioregions are producing food in this integral way. Industrialized farming, world export trends, national policies and unregulated global forces have severly altered the relative self-sufficiency of the earth's bioregions. National military and economic priorities prevail.

Self-Governing

There are fifteen beehives on the farm. As I learn the craft of beekeeping, I am more and more amazed at the monumental work they do. The internal governance of these creatures — the order observed, their perseverance at work, their community loyalty — is a microcosm of the living order among the life forms on these 140 acres, this bioregion, and the community of bioregions of the planet.

Without being aware of their significance, they aid the pollinating abilities of our planet's vegetation. They absorb from it and give back to it. I have also become aware of the precariousness and vulnerability of their lives. The chemical assault on "unwanted insects and weeds" is a major threat to these most beneficial beings. Good local environmental laws do not guarantee their safety. The poisons in our air and water know no geographical borders. Humans must submit to the earth's internal governance system or perpetration of these poisons will destroy the natural order which is our life-line.

Self-Healing

In spite of our extraordinary medical discoveries, the recuperative powers within the natural world remain largely untapped or foreign to us. There is a legacy of healing in the roots and plants and soil of this place. The Minsi knew and used many of those powers. Someday I hope the farm will explore this realm of healing forces.

Equally important, we need to grasp the relationships that contribute to a healthy planet: soil, air, water, plants, insects — all the living components. And we need to grasp how these are connected to the health of our bodies *and* our spirits.

Our bodies have incredible powers of rejuvenation. So does the earth. But when the immune system, the recuperative power of the former, breaks down to the degree and magnitude it has, then we must suspect that the immune system of the earth is in serious difficulty. The earth is sick. Our air, forests, food, water, birds and whales are sick. Their bioregions are sick. We each need to help heal our bioregions. The first step is to heal our own perceptions that fail to see the connections between ourselves and the earth. Surely we are all grateful for the commitment and dedication to life that motivates advancements in technology. But it is time for the healers among us to go beyond treating only the symptoms of our disease and illnesses, and to focus their insights, energies and compassion on the root causes of these symptoms.

Self-Fulfilling

Liturgy, celebration, festivals, the making of the beautiful: these flow out of a participation in the grandeur and pathos of the earth, of this place. Genesis Farm has its own history of struggle and pain, failure and frustration. Our memories are received into the memories of the farm. The tired soil, the decaying trees, the wounded deer, the weathered stones, the forgotten Minsi, the exiled wolves, the

builders of this house, the family who bequeathed it: we are all links in the ongoing mystery of a creation that is incomplete, finite, and even now struggling to give new birth.

The grandeur of it all! This is what we celebrate and shall continue to celebrate. The universe unfolds in all this struggle. It unfolds in our conscious thought of it. It is in our own reflection that the whole becomes one great conscious act of giving birth. All the components share a single history and a single center. The inner spaces are one space, where dwells the ancient Holy One, the Manito, the One of no name and all names.

We pray that this place may be a place for searchers — that we may continue to struggle in the shaping of a global spirituality, and a global community. This must be a place of spiritual quest, reading the created world as a sacred scripture among the other scriptures of history. Rooted in the Christian mystery, may it celebrate all expressions of the eternal paschal mystery, in the unfolding creation as it rises towards transformation and in its stories told in all its human hearts. May it be as committed to dying as it is to living, for only in enduring *breakdown* can it birth *breakthrough*.

And we pray that this may be a place of study, dialogue and creative work. May this work play some small but significant role in shaping a new world order. May this bioregion be fulfilled and transformed in us.

Hidden Mysteries: Tomorrow's Child

As I write, Genesis is mantled in a deep covering of snow. The world outside is silent, frozen, white. When such a silence descends, I am drawn, once again, to the ancient, hidden mysteries beneath the ground.

Beneath the frozen crust all living things sleep. Seeds and roots, crickets, microbes, worms and bulbs. It is the law of things. For longer than the longest memory, they have renewed their lives and energies in this communal rite of winter sleep.

When the last days of autumn yield to this healing sleep, the tiny creatures of the soil and night still sing and dance their journey. And when the very last, of their last, last, lingering songs falls into silence, that poignant night marks the true time of winter for our region. In some cavernous center, the great Manito breathes the great holy life of the earth into sleep. Then these hidden, small and insignificant beings rest from the awesome work whereby they sustain the world.

It is good to reflect on the power of small, hidden, insignificant things. It is the way of things.

When the snow has melted and the soil is moist and warmed, a renewal of invisible life shall pound and throb through the marrow of this place. A new generation of rocks and stones shall end their timeless ascent to the surface of our fields. For millions of years they have been pushing, ascending to the top.

How recently I would have greeted their appearance with regret. Another crop of boulders to lug and haul away. And with such effort and sweat — but now, no regret. They are tomorrow's soil. They are the treasure of this valley's ancient passage into now.

It is fire I will carry. From field to wall. Fire of a star now frozen into crystal gift. Laid before the sun and stars, these stones will know the force of wind and heat, water and cold. Their fire shall yield and change and break into the crumbled dust of soil. Tomorrow's soil. I carry that from field to wall. I plant them as a row of seeds. Bless them for the journey that will continue long after all the living community of today shall pass away. Worn and broken, they shall yield to life itself, and the hidden, tiny microbes shall break and feed them to the hairs of living roots for the great ascendancy into life. Perhaps they may grow up into wheat, wheat born of fire, fine and strong. Marrow of some future child. Child of the stony country. I will carry the bones of tomorrow's child. *Minsi, Minasinniu.*

Maine:

Working Together To Save The Soil

by Pauline Pare

Pauline Pare is a farm planner with the Soil Conservation Service in Maine, and is a member of the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

The United States is losing annually enough soil from erosion to cover three million acres with four inches of soil. The greatest single pollutant of rivers and lakes by volume is sediment, some four billion tons reaching our waters yearly. This amount stacked on a football field would reach 400 miles high. At this rate, without intervention to protect this vital, life-giving resource, the topsoil could be gone in 160 years. 2.8 billion tons of the eroded topsoil comes from 141 million acres of cropland which is losing soil over twice the rate that it can regenerate itself. Certainly, this soil loss is adversely affecting our productivity and ability to provide food for our global family as well as our quality of life.

My work with the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) as a farm planner in Maine allows me to take part in reversing the trend of soil erosion and abuse to our land and waters. SCS's mission is to help landowners and users to achieve a balance between use, management, conservation, and preservation of the Nation's natural resource base. I am presently assigned to a special project in Somerset and Penobscot Counties: the Sebasticook Lake Watershed Project. A few years ago Sebasticook Lake was rated the most polluted lake in the State by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. The unsightly blooms and related odors of the Lake are marks of negligence and abuse.

Sixty-one percent of the lake's pollution comes from the agricultural operations of 60 farms. Forty-four of these farms lack manure storage facilities. During the winter months, the farmers spread manure on frozen fields or pile it on poor sites. When the spring rains and snow melt the manure eventually reaches the streams that flow to Sebasticook. Also of concern are the 5000 cropland acres losing nearly 20,000 tons of soil annually. The phosphorus attached to the soil makes erosion a problem to the Lake.

My particular work takes me to the farms to look at the total resource picture from the barns to the fields. The farmer and I work out a conservation plan which will allow him to fully utilize his resources while at the same time protecting the resource base and the environment. The decisions often entail manure-storage with associated manure-recycling plans and conservation and erosion-control practices in the fields. Farmers have received monies from the SCS Small Watersheds Program and the Agricultural Conservation and Stabilization Service to help with the project. The benefits of the project are many:

- The farmers will be able to handle their animal wastes as a valuable resource. It is estimated that farmers will save $68,000 annually in fertilizer costs.
- The productivity of the cropland will be insured with conservation measures.
- Recreational use of the lake with its related economic and social factors will be restored.
- The Lake itself will be restored to a "healthy condition."

I like John Hart's expression of needed land reform in his book, *The Spirit of the Earth*. He sees land reform as land re-form. Land re-form means "an alteration of property relationships, ecological relationships and social relationships, all with the intention of promoting and effecting the congruence of human conduct and the ethical vision of the highest possibility for that conduct relative to life in the earth community."

I see my work as encouraging re-form of use and a re-form of relationship to the land and environment. Sebasticook Lake as well as its surrounding watershed is part of our earth given to us as a trust from God. It is good in itself and good for us, for all of us now and hopefully for the "us" of tomorrow. ■

Kansas: AN EVOLVING VISION FOR A HEARTLAND BIOREGIONAL COMMUNITY

by Betty Jean Goebel, O.P.

Betty Jean Goebel is a member of the Dominican Sisters of Great Bend, Kansas.

In 1980, the Dominicans of Great Bend, Kansas commissioned a study session on our place in the global community. In preparing my contribution to this study, I used one of Thomas Berry's articles, "Contemplation and World Order" (*The Whole Earth Papers*, Vol. 10). I presented his notion of a need to develop a whole new paradigm for looking at our place in the global community based on our relationship to the evolving cosmos.

In 1983, Miriam Therese MacGillis, O.P., of Global Education Associates, was invited to speak to our community on simplifying our lifestyle. She told us about Genesis Farm in New Jersey, (a joint project of the Caldwell Dominicans and Global Education Associates) where she conducts educational programs related to land issues.

One of our Sisters with a lay friend spent several weeks at Genesis Farm the following summer and brought back to our community some skills in French-intensive gardening which some of our semi-retired members were eager to experiment with.

In the fall of 1983 a committee of Sisters met to brainstorm ideas for elements to include in the projected Adult Peace Education project envisioned by our previous General Chapter. This group felt very strongly that our Community Peace Education effort should be three-pronged:

1. a Genesis-like farm development;
2. a Center for Spirituality and Peace Education;
3. continuation of our Itinerant Teaching/Preaching Team to reach those who cannot afford the luxury of time apart at the Center or the Farm.

In December of 1983, our community received an unexpected bequest of a 160 acre farm just 35 miles northeast of our projected Center for Spirituality in Great Bend, Kansas. The will stipulated that the farm was not to be sold and our general policy is to use bequests to the community for ministerial development rather than for our own sustenance; hence, this gift of a farm seemed like a prophetic affirmation of our vision.

In April, 1984 I was asked by the community to do research and coordinate the development of this three-pronged community effort. I see the essential elements to explore as the following:

1. Research the literature to define more clearly the parameters of bioregional communities and find written materials that will aid us in defining our own bioregion and assessing our local resources.

2. Examine the farm area, especially its acre or so of long-term uncultivated soil, to determine the nature of its soil, native flora and fauna, its water source and the cause of its present state of contamination (possibly by oil drilling that is going on all around it.)

3. Experiment with soil restoration methods, return of native edible fruits and vegetables, intensive organic gardening techniques, solar and wind energy sources, and the development of energy-saving shelter techniques before we start needed building projects.

4. Gather a local community of people with the awareness of cosmic connectiveness and a desire to live reflectively in interdependent relationships with all creatures of this bioregion and to strive toward goals of "self-nourishment, self-education, self-governance, self-healing, self-fulfillment and self-propagation." (These are the characteristics Thomas Berry proposes for functional-life communities.)

5. Offer opportunities in cosmos-centered education, creation-centered spirituality, and holistic health in a moderately sized, simple conference center with adequate dormitory and hermitage space. This center (which still needs to be constructed), would provide experiential learning opportunities.

6. Seek grants from possible foundations or independent financial resources willing to support such creative research, experimentation, and teaching projects.

As I reflect on the possibilities and challenges of such a venture, I have asked myself the question, "Does not all of this contain the possible nucleus for the evolution of one kind of new religious community lifestyle?" The envisioned community life would seem to include men and women, celibate and married, experimenting with new forms of extended family, human and inclusive of all creatures. ■

graphic by Martina Stegman, OP

To live we must daily break the body and shed the blood of Creation. When we do this knowingly, lovingly, skillfully, reverently, it is a sacrament. When we do it ignorantly, greedily, clumsily, destructively, it is a desecration. In such desecration we condemn ourselves to spiritual and moral loneliness and others to want.

Wendell Berry

The Gift of Good Land

GREEN THOUGHTS...

Reflections on the National Bioregional Congress and Green Politics

by Ron Hughes

Ron Hughes lives in Little Rock, Arkansas.

In the spring of 1984, some 200 bioregional representatives convened at what was called the First North American Bioregional Congress (NABC). They came from as far as Australia and South Africa to exchange ideas, philosophies, and action plans. It was a powerful gathering.

As diverse as the group was, there developed an unusual cohesiveness. There seemed to be common understanding of the relevance of concepts like bioregionalism, decentralization, local autonomy, non-violence, cultural diversity, and personal empowerment. It was a new generation of people and ideas coming of age. It represented a new paradigm, a whole earth view, and a growing awareness that could hopefully avert annihilation of the species. It was like a "shadow government" emerging to monitor needs and verbalize strategies to deal with issues to which existing power structures are failing to respond or even to recognize.

All business was conducted by consensus. There were no smoke filled rooms, heated debates, or mindless filibustering. There was urgency and excitement in the air. It was model cooperative democracy. And it was very, very Green.

It was further proof of the growing Green movement in America. And it reflected Green awareness around the world. The issues raised by the political West German Green Party, for instance, reflected the same concerns of ecologically aware Americans. Their basic tenets are rooted in and drawn from basic principles and movements of our American heritage. Their pillars of "ecology" and "non-violence" are found in our environmental and peace movements. Their third pillar of "grassroots democracy" is the heart and soul of our country's greatness. The last of their four pillars is "social responsibility." This mirrors the individual initiative it will take in this country to reorder our priorities and put us onto a survival course.

GREEN POLITICS: A STATEMENT OF VALUES

The following definition of green politics and values was drafted by a diverse group of people working to build a new politics in the United States. The statement grew out of a meeting held in Minneapolis in August, 1984. Sixty people attended from all over the country, and over 200 people later were invited to contribute suggestions for the statement. A national conference is being planned for the future hoping to catalyze a movement around these values.

In the meantime, those drafting this statement are calling themselves the Committee of Correspondence, which was the name for the grassroots political network in the American Revolutionary era. For more information write to: Committee of Correspondence, P. O. Box 14748, Minneapolis, MN 55414.

Definition

"Green" politics interweaves ecological wisdom, appropriate decentralization of economic and political power, personal and social responsibility, global security, and community self-determination within the context of respect for diversity of heritage and religion. It advocates nonviolent action, a cooperative world order, and self-reliance.

Statement of Values

This list of ten values is not a fixed but a living, expanding dialogue that raises questions we feel are not being addressed by either the political left or right. Our goal is a sustainable, participatory society that works for everyone and understands our relationship to the natural world.

1. Ecological Wisdom

How can we operate human societies with the understanding that we are *part* of nature, not on top of it? How can we live within the ecolological and resource limits of the planet, applying our technological knowledge to the challenge of an energy-efficient economy? How can we right the relationship between cities and the countryside? How can we protect all living things from unnecessary harm? How can we promote regenerative agriculture?

2. Nonviolence

How can we develop effective alternatives to our current patterns of violence, particularly armed conflict? How can we eliminate nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth without being naive about the intentions of other governments? How can we nonviolently protest practices and policies we oppose without simply adding to the atmosphere of polarization and selfishness that is itself a source of violence?

3. Decentralization

How can we empower people, institutions, communities, and regions to do more for themselves? How can we encourage the flourishing of regionally based culture rather than a dominant monoculture? How can we have a decentralized, democratic society with our political, economic, and social institutions locating power at the lowest (closest to home) level that is efficient and practical? How can we redesign our institutions so that fewer decisions and less control over money are granted as one moves from the community toward the national level? How can we reconcile the need for community and regional control with the need for appropriate centralized control in certain matters?

4. Grassroots Democracy

How can we develop a system that allows and encourages people to participate in the decisions that affect their lives? How can we ensure that representatives will be fully accountable to the people who elected them? How can we develop planning mechanisms that would allow citizens to develop and implement *their own* preferences for policies and spending priorities? How can we encourage the "mediating institutions" — family, neighborhood organization, church group, voluntary association, ethnic club — to take over some of the functions of the government? How can we relearn the best insights from American traditions of civic vitality, voluntary action, and community responsibility?

5. Cooperative Economics

How can we redesign our work structures to encourage employee ownership and workplace democracy? How can we develop new economic institutions that will allow us to use our new technologies in ways that are humane and freeing? How can we establish some form of basic economic security, open to all? How can we move beyond the narrow "job ethic" to new definitions of "work," "jobs," and "income" that reflect the changing economy? How could we share our wealth more equitably in order to acknowledge that a huge informal economy keeps our formal economy going? How can we restrict the size of corporations without punishing them for superior efficiency or technological innovation?

6. Inclusiveness

How can we empower minorities and the poor, rather than render them ever more dependent on the federal government? How can we help them become more self-reliant? How can we respect cultural, ethnic, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity without turning the United States into an "anything goes" society? While honoring diversity, how can we find common ground in our country's shared, finest ideals: the dignity of the individual, democratic participation, and liberty and justice for all?

7. Postpatriarchal Values

How can we replace the cultural ethics of dominance and control with more cooperative ways of interacting? How can we encourage people to care about persons outside their own group? How can we promote the building of respectful, positive, and responsible relationships across the lines of gender and other divisions? How can we encourage a rich, diverse political culture that respects feelings as well as rationalist approaches? How can we learn to respect the contemplative, inner part of life as much as the outer activities?

8. Future Focus

How can we induce people and institutions to think in terms of the long-range future, and not just in terms of their immediate self-interest? How can we encourage people to develop their own preferred visions of the future? How can we judge whether new technologies are socially useful — and use those judgments to shape our society? How can we induce our government and other institutions to practice fiscal responsibility? How can we make the quality of life, rather than open-ended economic growth, the focus of future thinking?

9. Personal and Social Responsibility

How can we encourage people to commit themselves to lifestyles that promote their own health? How can we have a community-controlled education system that effectively teaches our children academic skills, ecological wisdom, social responsibility, and personal growth? How can we resolve interpersonal and intergroup conflicts without just turning them over to lawyers and judges? How can we take responsibility for reducing the crime rate in our neighborhoods? How can we encourage such values as simplicity and frugality?

10. Global Responsibility

How can we be of genuine assistance to grassroots groups in the Third World? How can we ourselves learn from such groups? How can we help other countries make the transition to food self-sufficiency? How can we cut our defense budget while maintaining an adequate defense and a global influence that is sufficient to assertively preserve and protect these ten values? How can we create world order without creating just another enormous nation-state?

Much of the work at NABC was done in committees. Green politics was the focus of one such committee. Several participants were already involved in Green politics in America and Canada. One member, Charlene Spretnak, co-authored *Green Politics: The Global Promise*. The book is a history of the West German Greens and emerging Green politics elsewhere. It cites the Ozark Area Community Congress as being the most developed bioregional, Green political movement in the United States.

Bioregionalism provides a uniting common ground for many of the fragmented and disenfranchised groups and individuals around the country. Green politics are at home in bioregionalism. Green politics cross cultural, religious, ethnic, social, and sexual lines. Green politics are survival politics. The goal is sustainability and the foundation is ecology. The strategy is to find our non-violent, participatory place in the interrelatedness of the world in which we live. Ultimately, it can be no other way.

Existing political parties are so locked into the old power structure that the best they've shown us so far is an occasional environmental plank in just another "same old stuff" platform. That's not nearly good enough. A truly Green political platform would be grounded in ecology. All else would follow. Hopefully, the growing Green movement will move the existing institutions to respond. Perhaps they will. If not, it is likely that a Green party will emerge and take the lead. Perhaps that is why it is said that Green politics are neither left nor right...but in front. ■

ECOLOGICAL POLITICS AND BIOREGIONALISM

by David Haenke

David Haenke, the coordinator of the North American Bioregional Congress, and one of the prime movers of the Ozark Area Community Congress, lives at New Life Farm in Drury, Missouri. He is the author of "Ecological Politics and Bioregionalsism"

Acknowledging Natural Law

We are not in control. In the long run, *nature is in control.* We must recognize the existence and predominance of the system of natural law that is ultimately far older, deeper, wiser, more complete, and much more powerful than our systems of human law. This body of law is made up of the ecological laws of Earth. This is the real law of Earth. It is literally alive. It is conscious.

Natural science — that is, physics, biology, chemistry — has proven to its own satisfaction what folk wisdom around the world has held for ages: the natural world consists of a web of interdependent ecosystems, of relationships among those systems. The human body is comprised of systems and is itself a system; so is a forest, a swamp, a field, a watershed, a bioregion, a continent, and the biosphere. All the systems are parts as well as wholes and operate in dynamic, interconnected balance.

Living systems grow in proportion, or scale; they are self-regulating and regenerating. Within a system, diversity promotes stability and, hence, sustainability. The scale of the microcosm and macrocosm reflect each other. Nature is process, and structure is based on the dynamics of process. In addition, nature operates with invisible forces, which must be acknowledged if the systems are to be understood.

For billions of years Earth's ecological law has been coordinating a vast and increasingly more organized (yes, an abundance of negative entropy), sundriven system creating from light utilizable biomass to feed an astounding evolution of living diversity which wastes nothing, is self-regulating, self-organizing, and sustainable virtually forever. (Compare this to the dismal record of human industrial/technological/political systems, which exemplify the very heart and soul of terminal entropy).

The principles, or laws, of natural systems affect human existence since we are part of the systemic web of life, not above it. We are simply not exempt from natural, or ecological, law. The disease of human society — that is, our interrelated crises — results from our being out of balance with the natural whole. One way or another, nature always gets the last word. Therefore, planetary stewardship under ecological law must be a top priority for the human race. No human systems and ways of being, neither material nor spiritual systems, can sustain us for any longer than the near term unless they are rooted in, directly derived from, and in balance with ecological law.

In fact, the ecological laws — which also run every detail of the physical functioning of our own bodies and minds — are codes that contain *translatable* blueprints or templates (or "greenprints") for the conceptual redesigning (design as nature) and implementing of all human systems, including the technological, economic, social, ethical, political, and agricultural. As John Todd noted, all can be "structured according to an ecological blueprint of the kind that underlies a forest or a pond." These greenprints provide not only general concepts but also detailed and complete information.

Political Ecology

Through the natural sciences we get an interpretation of the physical functioning of the ecological laws. Through appropriate technology we are given the means to harmonize human technology with these laws. But to acknowledge natural law further, to adopt it as the coordinating pattern for every aspect of human society, this law must be translated into human language and the constructs of human law, implemented, and enforced. This is done through *political ecology*: the expression of natural law as fundamental principles of political theory, organization, platforms, programs, and action. Political ecology must inform areas of governance, both official and unofficial. It could also be the guiding principle in electoral campaigns and in establishing systems of organization that would be parallel to the official government, such as bioregional systems.

Presently law, politics, and government are mingled together in human consciousness, and neither the pattern of their development nor the relationship among them is clear. In the aggregate, human law/politics/government are adrift and out of control because they reflect our species' self-obsession and willful ignorance of natural law. "Law" in this sense means not only the operant principles of the natural and human physical systems, but also that which guides and binds behavior and ethics (ecological civil law). This does not mean that every aspect of human social order can or should be deterministically modeled on what lessons we are able to draw from nature, especially in these rudimentary, early stages of the translation process. The human potential for wisdom, creativity, compassion, and loving kindness — should always inform the ideals and operation of any human system. However, we can be guided in our interactions by the human aspects of certain principles of "deep ecology," such as respect based on an understanding of the intricate interdependence among peoples. ■

READER EXCHANGE

Red River Valley

The more I have been thinking about what is happening in our Red River Valley area — the changes that are taking place in this area in agriculture, water resources, wildlife, etc. — the more concern I have for the people living here. Employment of our native population plus the migrant programs are being much affected...the Air Force base in Grand Forks and Minot and the missile sites in these areas also cause great concern.

I am grateful that your letter has increased my awareness of the "need to perceive ourselves as participants with other life forms in a divine process."

I have begun talking to others about "bioregionalism" and thus hope to create new awareness about this subject. Thanks for the "call" to enter this dialogue.

Lenore Weier
Moorhead, MN

Values to Live By

Apart from the deliberations of a handful of thinkers, we have little in Western thought from which to flesh out Leopold's ideal changeover of "Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it." Ecological consciousness and an ecological conscience depart from — indeed, they leap way beyond historic Western visions and ideals for society.

If ethical and moral values are principles that societies develop to respect and protect the interests of the group as a whole, then ecological consciousness redefines the "group" beyond the society at hand to the planet at hand: all nature, all of its peoples, and all the interlocking systems that sustain life. Additionally, an ecological conscience refocuses "interests" in a dimension of time that extends backward and forward; it builds out of an understanding of where we have been and moves toward a deep sense of responsibility for where life is headed — generations into the future.

Jean MacGregor
Evergreen College
Olympia, WA

Re-Myth Genesis

A recent experience that has helped me understand the need for a changing human relationship with the earth is reading Elizabeth Dodson Gray's book, *Green Paradise Lost*. In page after page she reminds the readers of their unity with the earth, and their need to shed hierarchical myths and ways of thinking by which they perceive themselves as having mastery over the rest of creation. Hierarchical thinking makes it so easy to do violence to the earth. As her last chapter heading states, "We Must Re-Myth Genesis." On page 74, she draws upon the symbols of "several dancers holding hands, whirling in space and leaning backward against the tension of those clasped hands." Each dancer is equally important in mutually supporting and holding the others in position. "We are one of those dancers within the dance of life. But we are mutually held in position by every other species, by the rain and sun and the vast unseen food chains and recycling systems, even down to the smallest phytoplankton in the oceans. We mutually support one another in the interconnections which flow through our bodies and life-histories."

Marcella Steffes
La Crosse, WI

How to Envision the Divine?

An issue that I ponder about in the area under discussion is how one envisions the Divine in this area. I have generally abandoned the idea of God as creator of the universe, etc. and I hold on to some Quaker, and others, idea of the Divine in each person, but I don't have a satisfactory sense of the Divine in all creation. I've really never studied the non-western religions enough to know how they handle this. I would be in a more satisfactory position if I could envision ways of explaining in more than a practical reason, the involvement of all in the Divine.

"Reverence for life" as I've felt it, never seemed entirely satisfactory for the above.

Cyrus Johnson
Greensboro, NC

Green Thoughts: From the Arkansas River Watershed

The Ozark Mountains are a distinctive bioregion. Yet the region laps over into five states and its autonomy, needs, and interests are almost always subordinated to the distinctly different needs of the other parts of all five of those states. Fragmented, it is helpless. When the bottom dropped out of the sewage lagoon in West Plains, Missouri, in 1978, it polluted groundwater for untold miles into Arkansas. This was a bioregional problem that transcended arbitrary state lines.

The Arkansas River has long been an industrial and agricultural sewage ditch. It flows through three states, and drains two more before reaching Arkansas. No matter how strict Arkansas water pollution policies may be, Arkansas River water will never leave the state cleaner than when it entered. Arkansas cannot process the Arkansas River. One state cannot address the problem. The health of the Arkansas River is a watershed problem. It is a bioregional problem. It will require the coordinated effort of regions of five states.

This is not to advocate the disbanding of states or nations. It is to help us realize that many current and future issues transcend state lines and even national boundaries, and so should our thinking and politics. We are all part of the world in which we live, and all God's creatures have a right to healthy coexistence. We have an obligation to begin thinking globally.

by Ron Hughes
Little Rock, AR

Project Holoville

I am enclosing discussion of our "Project Holoville". It is a place where experience of interrelations and experimentation on the interrelatedness of all things will develop. We hope to explore, as Thomas Berry points out, that the "universe articulates itself in each of its parts, and each part of the universe is articulated in every other part." Or, as with the concept of a holosystem, the "whole" not only contains its parts, but is contained by each part.

Jack Keiffer
Niagara Falls, NY

READER EXCHANGE

Concept of Bioregionalism

The concept of bioregionalism is earth-based as opposed to politically-based as states are. Living in an earth-based society will mean considering the impact all of our activities have on the earth, as well as a reordering of priorities for most of us. It is a step in the direction of putting the earth in her proper place in our lives. We will learn not only how to care for her, but how to allow her to nourish and sustain us spiritually. We will, once again, become aware of the earth as Gaia — living, conscious, healer. We will learn to communicate with Gaia, recognizing at last, the thread of life and love that connects us all.

Susan Meeker-Lowry
Montpelier, Vermont

Land Co-operatives and Land as a Trust

The idea that land is a trust includes the belief that we are stewards of land with the responsibility of protecting all life on the planet. It contradicts the idea that people have dominion over the Earth and that we even have the right to consider destroying life on the planet. This view places limits on what people have the right to do. If we accept land as a trust then we do not have the right to pollute the air and water. Accepting land as a trust means that we must leave areas in their natural state so that we do not endanger the environment of other living creatures. Some people believe that accepting land as a trust also means that people cannot own land. I believe that the idea of land as a trust can be compatible with private ownership of land.

I live in the Miccosukee Land Co-operative near Tallahassee, Florida. Our land co-op originally had 240 acres, 160 of which were owned by individuals and 80 of which were owned in common. The covenants and restrictions covering the land stipulated that except for a few acres, the eighty acres of common land would always remain natural. A larger area bordering the common land is part of the "natural preserve" and is covered by restrictions that limit the percentage of land that can be cleared. The entire land is protected with restrictions against clearing trees. These restrictions have worked so well that now ten years after the formation of the land co-op, the land is more heavily treed than before.

The land co-op structure is a formula that works. The land has been protected. Individuals can sell their land and homes if they decide to move. Besides clean air and water, a protected environment, and the security of being able to see their land, individuals enjoy other benefits in land co-operatives. Because land co-ops are intentional communities, individuals can live in unfinished houses, which enables people to build homes without mortgages. People interact more in land co-ops, help each other, and use barter. Land co-ops are spreading with people meeting in several cities to start new co-operatives.

David W. Felder
Tallahassee, FL

David Felder is the author of a book on land co-operatives, The Best Investment: Land In A Loving Community *(Wellington Press, P.O. Box 13504, Tallahassee, Florida 32317, 1983).*

Invented to be Earthlovers

The central reality we can know is the earth. The earth is the intermediary creator, cosmic agent, God's agent, and for the human is primary lawgiver, primary teacher, primary healer, and primary source of life, beauty, spirituality, joy, and love. The earth is also primary revelation. The earth has existed for four billion years and has evolved life in a sequence which science has penetrated ever more deeply, especially over the past half century. The human has existed for a million or more years with a recorded history that goes back a few thousand. Our own identity is to be found in knowing how we are connected to the system and the process and in locating ourselves in space and time. All creatures perform a function, fill a niche. What has evolved has come to be in consequence of conditions that favored its existence. Everything that happens had the potential to happen. And each element of a life system helps to maintain that system. Thus, the wolf and the deer both sustain the life system of the forest.

What is the function, the purpose, of the human? We have said that it is to love God and to be happy. But how is this function taken care of in the earth's scheme? The human brings to the earth the ability to reflect, to love, to admire, to enjoy, to appreciate, to learn, to understand, to be fascinated, to be zestful. Without the human none of these functions would be satisfied. The earth has brought the human into existence to know the beauty of the earth. The human *is* the earth in a real way, the earth with a capacity for self love. The human was invented by the earth to be an earthlover.

James F. Berry
Raleigh, North Carolina

Business Based on Ecological Law

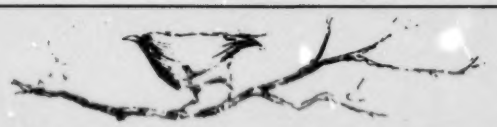
Business and organizations can become self-regulating and self-organizing by basing themselves and their function in ecological law. This specifically entails writing covenants into their bylaws based on these ecological laws. These covenants would structure corporate operations for maximal positive effect of those operations on the environment, as well as ensuring feedback on environmental impact and direct positive organizational response to that feedback. This will improve overall efficiency and make possible sustainable long term profitability, while minimizing the need for external regulation.

It is vital to begin basing the design and operation of all systems and the formulation of all policies on ecological law because: 1) these laws and the applications of them will work better than anything else on a sustained basis; 2) not to do so is wasteful, destructive, and suicidal.

From the material to the spiritual there is very little reason any more not to honor the earth and its laws. It is time now for the human species to rejoin as a cooperating member of the earth's whole living community. In that rejoining lies the deep family and the real abundance that we seek.

David Haenke
New Life Farm
Drury, MO

ON BIOREGIONALISM



Genesis IV: A Garden Community in the City

The study of Christian Non-Violence, global spirituality, world hunger, nuclear disarmament, first world exploitation, and econological concerns through GEA newsletters, Genesis Farm workshops, and speaker Thomas Berry has led me and several others to begin forming our Genesis IV garden community here in the Greater Lawrence area of Massachusetts.

In the past immigrant families have been able to raise their large families on two or three acre plots of land without being overly dependent on outside resources so geared to expensive and environmentally taxing transportation from out of state. Many of these small plots of land are being sold to be subdivided into smaller housing lots with little or no option of having even a small garden. We believe that Massachusetts and other parts of the U.S. need far-sighted people to reverse this trend. We hope to contribute to this ideal in a community of men and women dedicated to prayer and subsistent living at 11 North Lowell Street in Methuen, Massachusetts. (Rt. 113 West as you come off Rt. 93 over the Merrimac River).

This site can be visited to better visualize what we have in mind. Our goal is to encourage other such small garden communities in the Greater Lawrence area. We believe that partial self-sufficiency where people produce most of what they need on an aesthetically proportioned piece of land is an idea that will be attractive and useful to others in the area.

At Genesis IV we have a vision of life lived in harmony with nature. We want to create a place where people can experience a simple life committed to non-violence, reverence for the earth, holistic living (within natural cycles), stewardship, the interdependence of all peoples, and hospitality. We see a way of life that concerns itself with an appreciation of the gifts of nature, including the human person, and with the commitment to help others do the same.

Specifically this includes growing and preserving our own food without chemicals, poisons, or gimmicks. It means learning how to develop energy resources that are practical without threatening the environment, and which will help us be more self-sufficient. We hope to help create a more humane environment where individuals have more control over their lives and government, where both the plant and animal kingdoms flourish in an ecological balance with humans, and where neighbors and nations are guided by a spirit of cooperation and care for the earth.

Margie Wagner
Lawrence, MA

Bioregionalism: "Think Globally..."

The late Rene Dubos coined the classic phrase, "Think globally, act locally." Translating that environmentally one gets, "Think globally, act bioregionally!" Or, "act in your bioregion".

Bioregional awareness, as all rich concepts, has multiple implications. These implications include challenges to think and re-think how each one's small part of the world interacts with all the rest of the world.

On Oct. 24, 1984, *The New York Times* carried a headline, "Maine Timber Shortage Is Seen By The Year 2000." This "very serious situation," said the director of Maine's Forest Service, could have a major impact on the state's timber-centered economy and environment.

The next day *The Detroit Free Press* presented a lengthy account, "Who's Killing The Black Forest?"

Both of these dire situations express bioregionalism in default, in reverse, by omission, by oversight, by criminal neglect, with ominous global portent. Regrettably, such situations are increasingly commonplace.

Michael Stewart, British university and government economist, has written in a provocative volume, *The Age of Interdependence:*

> The extent to which conditions on the earth in future decades are being ineluctably determined by today's actions or lack of actions finds little echo in contemporary economic decision-making: the time-horizons remain as short as ever.

Ask residents in bioregions as distant as Maine and West Germany if their forest lands fit Stewart's observation. Wise bioregionalism calls for long-range, global awareness — leading to shorter-range, local planning, consciousness and action in many creative ways.

Author Stewart parallels the G.E.A. call for long-range, global observation, re-thinking and planning. "The global environment is a seamless web," says Stewart. Bioregionalism emphasizes that every person, every region and every nation holds a crucial role in that "seamless web" which is God's world — and our only home.

John C. Schwarz
GEA Regional Coordinator
Ann Arbor, MI

APPALACHIA AND BIOREGIONALISM

1985 marks the Tenth Anniversary of the Catholic Bishops of Appalachia's Pastoral Letter, "This Land is Home to Me"

by Patrick Ronan

Patrick Ronan is the Director of the Appalachian Office of Justice and Peace. He is an advocate for bioregionalism.

1985 marks the 10th anniversary of the Catholic Bishops of Appalachia's Pastoral Letter, "This Land Is Home To Me." The internationally acclaimed pastoral letter on powerlessness in the Appalachia Region of the U. S. was four years in process. This was to insure the document reflected the concerns of the poor. It has now evolved into a collective and conscious awareness of the reality of "Bioregionalism."

In the opening statement, the Bishops say in the pastoral:

> "The cries come now from Appalachia but they are echoed across the land — across the earth in the suffering of too many peoples. Together these sufferings form a single cry.'"

Our region, then, is a reflection of other regions in the U.S. and across the globe. The regions' natural resources have been exploited by the demands of a consumer society and our land and people have suffered greatly because of it. The unjust and fragmented use of people and land for profit continues to be a major concern to the Bishops of the region.

In 1981, with its roots in the Appalachian Bishops Pastoral, the "Appalachian Land Ownership Study" was released. The seven-volume study, prepared by the Appalachian Alliance, a coalition of scholars, church workers, community organizers and community people from the region, has documented land and mineral ownership and property tax patterns in six Appalachian states. Among the conclusions of the "Appalachian Land Ownership Study" are the following:

- "In the 80 Appalachian counties sampled, the top 1% of the owners own 44% of the land
- The other 99% of the population must compete for the remaining 56% of the land
- Of the 13 million acres of surface land sampled, 72% is absentee owned
- Of the mineral rights in the survey, 80% are absentee owned
- Over 75% of the mineral owners pay less than 25 cents per acre in property taxes
- Forty-one percent of the land and materials owned by the 30,000 owners in the survey are held by only 50 private owners and 10 government agencies
- Forty-six of the 50 owners are corporations, most of them absentee
- The federal government is the largest single landowner in Appalachia, holding over two million acres."[1]

The Catholic Committee of Appalachia summarizes the findings of the study thus:

> "In summary, the study has found that the patterns of concentrated, absentee, and corporate ownership of land and minerals have major effects on how the land is used and for whose benefit. Decisions over the use of land are made 'de facto' by large and more powerful owners in terms of their own interests. While such decisions can affect dramatically the course of an area's development, the affected has little to say in how these decisions are made, and often derive few benefits from such decisions."[1]

What is evidenced by concentrated ownership of natural resources is that decisions made concerning land (or resource) use are made for the few. The adverse affects of this situation in the Appalachian region is that:

- poverty exists among the people amid plenty
- wealth realized from the land goes out of the region
- the traditional Appalachian small family farm cannot compete in the market place and goes out of production and agriculture
- land for housing for ordinary people is not available
- energy and resource production in the hands of the large energy conglomerates means new levels of capital and technology which includes strip mining on a larger scale than ever before in the region
- basic services like schools suffer because of an inadequate and fair property tax system.

These problems are an obvious antithesis of the concept of bioregionalism. They reflect a fragmental and disordered use of the people and land in a given region. The Appalachian region is connected by natural boundaries and shares all aspects of its life mutually and reciprocally, only to be intruded upon by people who don't care.

In Virginia, there are about four definable regions that are biologically connected:

1. East Tidewater
2. The Piedmont (Southside area)
3. The Valley Ridge (Shenandoah Valley area)
4. The Plateau (far Southwest coal fields)

It is the alienation of people from the land and land from people that is the root of the problem.

Each region could be considered a bioregion. The concept is being used frequently by more people who have become aware of the intimate relationship of people to the land and of people and land, together, to God. People know intuitively of the gift of life given as a whole connected act: people and land beginning as one, becoming, and then nurturing each other in the life of the Spirit. It is the alienation of people from land and land from people that is the root of our problems. We've got to change our way of thinking and acting because people and land go together.

I like Thomas Berry's definition of a bioregion — "an indentifiable, geographic region of interacting life forms." Another definition by David Haenke of the Ozark Area Community Congress goes like this: "Bioregionalism deals with the bioregion as a whole system comprised of a set of diverse, integrated natural sub-systems (atmospheric, hydrologic, biologic, geologic) run by ecological laws with which humans (as one species among many) must work in cooperation if there is to be a substantial future."

These laws form the basis for the sustainment and development of life in the long-term. They are just and right because they project us into the future through the generations and the biology that is to come, among whom will be the Christian in the Parousia.

In conclusion, let me share with you some of the dreams of our diocese with regard to bioregionalism. In their closing remarks, the Appalachian Bishops in the pastoral letter, "This Land Is Home To Me," call the people of the region and the church, to come together in prayer and reflection in centers of reflection in the region.

> "We would like to commend where they exist and recommend where they do not centers of reflection and prayer in the service of action throughout the region."[4]

And again, the Bishops tell us:

> "...we commend where they exist and recommend where they do not, Centers of Popular Culture in every parish or in areas where there are no parishes...places where the poor feel welcome spaces for people to come and share at all levels, so that if a new society is to be born, it will emerge from the grassroots."[5]

Such a center is in process in the Appalachian region of our diocese. We are aware that we must be about a process of inclusion, of listening, of sharing, and acting together. The center therefore, is as important in its process as it is in its building because we respect people and land. The Region X Land Reflection Center, then, includes the land as a primary factor in its inception.

Land is to be understood as a trust from God to humanity, to nurture present and future generations, and to support all created life.

Reflection is to be understood as reflection on God's creation and God's word; on God's call and the call experienced in the needs of our neighbor and the land.

Center is to be understood as a place to find God; a place to come together, and to send our ripples of energy to spread the renewal that happens there.

The Land Reflection Center will be a place where bioregionalism can happen and where people and land will become conscious of each other.

Notes:

1. "This Land Is Home To Me", page 1
2. Land: A Broken Covenant, The Catholic Committee of Appalachia, 1983
3. Ibid
4. "This Land Is Home To Me", page 14
5. Ibid

Unless the straitjacket of national security is clearly identified, efforts to turn back the assault on the land can have only limited gains.

— Gerald Mische

Land and the National Security Straitjacket

WORLD CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Reprinted with permission from World Goodwill Newsletter.

Why a World Strategy is Needed

1. Living resources essential for human survival and sustainable development are increasingly being destroyed or depleted. At the same time human demand for these resources is growing fast. If current rates of land degradation continue, close to one third of the world's arable land will be destroyed in the next 20 years. Similarly, by the end of this century (at present rates of clearance), the remaining area of unlogged productive tropical forest will be halved. During this period the world population is expected to increase by almost half — from just over 4,000 million to just under 6,000 million. The predicament caused by growing numbers of people demanding scarcer resources is exacerbated by the disproportionately high consumption rates of developed countries.

2. The action required to cure the most serious current conservation problems and to prevent still worse ones takes time: time for planning, education, training, better organization and research; and when such action is undertaken, it takes time for the biosphere to respond — reforestation, the restoration of degraded land, the recovery of depleted fisheries, and so on, are not instantaneous processes.

3. National and international capacities to conserve are ill-organized and fragmented — split up amongst sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries and wildlife — with consequent duplication of effort, gaps in coverage, competition for money and influence, and conflict; and they have little influence on the development process, with the result that development, the principal means of tackling human problems, too often adds to them by destroying or degrading the living resource base of human welfare.

A Global Plan

Human civilization as it exists today is destroying the earth's capacity to support life. The problem is global. If we are to live in harmony with nature, then it is essential that social and economic patterns change. The peoples and governments of the world must begin to act now to save the planet. The World Conservation Strategy is a plan for survival and it sets out what needs to be done in the 1980s.

Launched simultaneously in thirty capital cities around the world, the World Conservation Strategy is an outstanding achievement for the international community. It is the first time that governments, non-governmental groups and scientists have worked together to prepare an integrated global plan to save the biosphere. It is a plan of action with recommendations for the steps that need to be taken by individual governments within their own national boundaries and in association with other governments and conservation groups. A number of countries have already launched their own national conservation strategies in response to the plan.

The Strategy was prepared by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) with the help of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

It was the result of widespread discussion and negotiation between government agencies, conservation groups and experts from over one hundred countries and it has the backing and support of UNESCO and of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Conservation and Development

The fact that agreement was reached on what needs to be done to "save the world" is, in itself, a real achievement and is largely due to the very pragmatic nature of the plan. It is designed to win the support of governments and industry in all parts of the world and is based on the idea of conserving the natural resources that humanity needs for its health and future social and economic development. The conservation measures proposed are shown to serve the long-term interest of industrial and agricultural development in both the poor and the wealthy parts of the world. This is a plan for sustainable development showing that unrestrained exploitation and pollution of nature simply destroys the foundations of future human progress.

Poverty — A Major Cause of Environmental Problems

The Strategy argues that poverty is one of the major causes of environmental problems and proposes that any plan to conserve natural resources can only work if it includes a coordinated effort to eliminate hunger and poverty.

For the hundreds of millions of poor people in the world life is a continual struggle. If they are to survive they must exploit every resource in the environment that can sustain life. Thus natural fertilizers such as dung are used as fuel for cooking instead of returning them to the soil; and trees are cut from the shrinking forests to meet the continual demand for firewood. The problems created by the destruction of the environment in the developing countries have long-term effects on the entire planetary eco-system.

The World Conservation Strategy argues that these problems cannot be resolved by the Third World on its own. They affect every country and it is in the long-term interest of all that the developed nations should assist in financing labor-intensive, energy-saving projects that enable rural communities to both conserve and develop their local resources. Development, the Strategy argues, "cannot be secured without conservation, nor conservation without development."

Overconsumption in the Developed World

Poverty is only one of the causes for the decline of the world's crop lands, the growth of deserts and other environmental problems. The demands caused by overconsumption in the developed world is another serious factor. One of the priority areas where the World Conservation Strategy calls for urgent action is in stopping the destruction of forests, especially the tropical rain forests. Here two sets of pressures may be identified. "One is the result of poverty combined with population growth — the desperate struggle of peasant forest-dwellers to stay alive and earn a decent living. The other is the result of excessive or carelessly applied commercial demand, largely by people in the developed countries." The

Strategy recommends, therefore, that all commercial logging should be subject to conservation plans administered by governments to ensure that essential processes of the forest are retained and that felling is balanced by replanting. Beyond this the Strategy calls for a reduction in the demand for forest products (especially rain forest products) in the developed world through public education programs and international measures to raise the price of the products concerned. The Strategy also proposes that the developed nations provide financial and technical help to the poorer nations whose need for foreign currency forces them to overexploit the resources of the forests.

The Force of Public Opinion

To a great extent the success of the World Conservation Strategy will depend upon the response to its proposals for environmental education. The resources of the planet are being destroyed because the people and commercial forces do not yet see that it is in their interest not to destroy them. The Strategy proposes that educational programs should be aimed at the groups most actively involved in using these resources.

The World Conservation Strategy deserves our support and co- operation. For it will ultimately be the force of an informed public opinion which will persuade governments to endorse the Strategy and to act upon its recommendations.

Recommended Book

A full report on the most serious dangers facing the biosphere and on the proposals of the World Conservation Strategy is contained in an excellent paperback book, from which the quotations in this article have been drawn: *How to Save the World: Strategy for World Conservation* by Robert Allen (published by Kogan Page Ltd., London.)

BIOREGIONS: WHERE PERSON AND PLANET MEET

by Catherine Burton

Catherine Burton, PhD., is co-founder of the EarthBank Association and Co-editor of EarthBank News *which investigates and reports on sustainable economic alternatives.*

One of the best ways of studying how life works is to study your bioregion. Bioregion is from the Latin *bio* meaning life and *region* meaning territory. Bio-regions are life territories or ecosystems — the wholes within the earth's whole. They are the place where the person and planet come together. They are the way the earth organizes and regulates itself. We would do well to pay heed.

Bioregions are the places in which we live, not determined by arbitrary human-made political boundaries, but by the ways of the natural world. Bioregions are a way of knowing ourselves by knowing home. Bioregions, by connecting us with the earth as a whole, are the places where thinking globally and acting locally find each other.

For those who feel a connection to the earth comes a reverence for life as a guiding value. Along with that comes an appreciation for the *natural* economy dedicated to efficient preservation, conservation and sustenance of life's resources and a balance between the forces toward individual differentiation and the forces toward integration within the whole.

A society in balance with the ways of nature is one that seeks to preserve, conserve, and sustain the life of the air, water, soil, forestry, and land systems.

Life in the ecosystem encourages local self-reliance while recognizing interregional dependency as well as the connection to the system as a whole. Such a system is one that often shows competition during the early phases when resources are abundant and the task at hand is to assure species survival and *then shifts to a cooperative mode* when the system has matured and resources are scarce. In this mature phase, the system circulates resources, energy, food (also read information, money, goods) within the region and away from any single point of concentration—a characteristic that has been discovered in all just and nonviolent cultures. Such a system keeps the population of different species in sustainable numbers and demonstrates an appropriateness of scale.

In the bioregion, each unit of life finds its own niche through the process of differentiation, matching its specific abilities and needs with the needs of the bioregion at large. In this way it becomes connected to and integrated with the earthwhole.

In these life territories, resources are used to preserve and nourish life not amalgamated and wasted in destroying it. In such a system, life moves to both maintain and to renew itself through natural instincts fostering both the *survival of the individual* and *the survival of the species* as a whole. While species may engage in ritualized ceremonies of aggression, they do not kill members of their own species. In such a society, there is an instinctual knowing of the interconnectedness of all.

Such is the life of the bioregion. And such, quite simply, is a blueprint of a workable society. Little did we know that the answers were there all along right in front of us — no further away than a group of trees upon whose roots and branches the secrets of life's intelligence were told. Whether we choose to heed life's wisdom is a choice we face individually and collectively. The consequences of whatever choice we make are inescapable and will indeed determine the destiny of our species and the earth.

INTRODUCTORY BIBLIOGRAPHY ON BIOREGIONALISM, LAND, STEWARDSHIP AND CREATION SPIRITUALITY

This bibliography was compiled with the help of Mary Alice Guilfoil, Thomas Berry, Marcella Steffes, Margie Wagner, and Janice Thane.

The Best Investment: Land In a Loving Community. David W. Felder. (Tallahassee, FL: Wellington Press, 1983), 161 pp. $8.50. Examines the community dynamics and implications of the community route to self-sufficiency.

Beyond Geography: The Western Spirit Against the Wilderness. Frederick Turner. (Viking Press).

Bioregions, *Co-Evolution Quarterly* (No. 32, Winter, 1981), (Point Corp. Press).

Black Elk Speaks. John Neihardt. (Pocket Books).

Bread for the World. Arthur Simon. (Ramsey, N.J.: Paulist Press, first published, 1975. Revised edition, 1985). $4.95. Aimed at public policy change to overcome hunger.

A Catholic Worker Philosophy of the Land. Special Edition of *The Catholic Agitator*, (Los Angeles Catholic Worker paper, May, 1984). Available from 632 N. Brittania, Los Angeles, CA 90033. Excellent articles—in best Catholic Worker tradition.

The Clan of the Cave Bear. Also **Valley of the Horses.** Jean Auel. (New York: Bantam, 1981, 1982). Fascinating novels about the life of paleolithic tribes and individuals, with their immersion in the land, landscape and "ecology" of their time. Marvelous imaginings of "creative discovery" and feminine perspective on it all.

Cry of the Environment: Rebuilding the Christian Creation Tradition. Philip Jorenson and Ken Butigan, etal. (Santa Fe: Bear & Co., 1984).

The Earth Is the Lord's: Essays on Stewardship. Mary Evelyn Jegen and Bruno Manno, editors. (New York: Paulist Press, 1978). Excellent collection. Includes: "A Biblical Perspective on Stewardship," Ronald Sider; "The Ethics of Stewardship," William Byron; "Stewardship: The Feminine Perspective," Doris Donnely; "Agriculture, Stewardship and a Sustainable Future," Donald Geiger; "Stewardship and NIEO," Philip Land; "Stewardship and Life-Style," Jennifer Haines; "Parenting In a Hungry World," Patricia Mische, etal.

Earthkeeping. Loren Wilkerson, editor. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Erdsmans), 317 pp. $11.00. Helpful up-to-date reader on Christian use of natural resources.

Ecological Politics and Bioregionalism. David Haenke. (Mimeo booklet, 30 pp. Available from New Life Farm, Drury, MO., 63638.

Entropy. Jeremy Rifkin. (New York: Bantam, 1981). Theory and analysis that place the environmental crisis in its historical setting and show the need for a new, more radically scientific world view.

Farming and Art, *The Little Magazine.* (Vol II Nos. 8 and 9). This publication reflects the philosophy of Matthew Fox and the Institute in Culture and Creation Spirituality. This issue is devoted to articles on farming, the environment and creation-centered spirituality. Available from Bear & Co., P.O. Drawer 2860, Santa Fe, NM, 87504-2860.

Farming the Lord's Land. Charles Lutz, editor. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing Company), 208 pp. $6.50. Good collection of Christian perspectives on American agriculture.

Gaia: An Atlas of Planet Management. Norman Myers, general editor. (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1984), 272 pp. $17.95. Beautifully illustrated with color photos and charts. A valuable resource on the fragile interaction and interdependence that link all living things. Includes sections on land, ocean, elements, evolution, humankind, civilization and management.

The Gift of Good Land. Also, **The Unsettling of America: Cultures & Agriculture.** Wendell Berry. (Avon Books, 1977) (Berkeley, California: North Point Press, 1981). Berry is a poet, farmer, lover of the land — a modern Thoreau. He explores the interdependence of peoples, land, weather, animals and family, and presents a carefully reasoned critique of American culture and agriculture.

Green Paradise Lost. Elizabeth Dodson Gray. (Wellesley, Massachusetts: Round Table Press, 1979, 1981). $7.95.

Green Politics. Fritjof Capra and Charlene Spretnak. (E.P. Dutton, 1984). $11.95. Describes how the Green Party is transforming the political culture of Europe and points to the budding development of a green movement in the United States and worldwide.

Green Revolution. Quarterly publication of the School of Living, R.D. 7, York, PA, 17402.

How to Save the World: Strategy for World Conservation. Robert Allen. (London: Kogan Page Ltd.).

Human Energy. Teilhard de Chardin. (Harcourt Brace).

The Immense Journey. Loren Eiseley. (Vintage).

The Land. Walter Brueggemann. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), $5.50. A basic text on a biblical theology of land.

The Land: Who Owns the Earth? *Sojourners,* (November, 1979). Theme of this issue.

Land and World Order. *The Whole Earth Papers* (No. 17). Patricia Mische, editor. (East Orange, New Jersey: Global Education Associates, 1982). Available from Global Education Associates 552 Park Ave., East Orange, NJ, 07017. $3.50. This special edition includes articles by John Radano, Jerry Mische, Walter Brueggemann, Thomas Berry, Robert Swann, Cary Fowler, N. Scott Momaday and others.

Land Packet. Developed by LCWR Region XIII. Includes readings, prayers, reflections. 10 pp. mimeo. Available for $2.00 from Sr. Janice Thane, 3600 Broadway, Great Bend, KS, 67530.

Light to the World. Bernard Haring. (New York: Crossroad, 1981). Responsibility toward human life, both private and public; one of the fullest treatments of ecology by a Roman Catholic moralist.

Living in the Environment. G. Tyler Miller. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1982). A college text that is a complete primer on ecological science and strategies.

The Machine in the Garden. Leo Marx. (Oxford University Press).

Monks and the Land, by Terrence Kardong, O.S.B. *Cistercian Studies*, XVIII - 1983:2, pp. 135-148. Excellent ground-breaking article to focus attention of Benedictines on their relationship and possible contributions to rural and land issues.

Mother of All: An Introduction to Bioregionalism. Kirkpatrick Sales. Third annual E.F. Schumacher Lectures. Mimeo booklet, 37 pp. $3.00. Write E.F. Schumacher Society, Box 76 A, RD 3, Gt. Barrington, MA 01230.

Nature's Economy. Donald Worster. (Sierra Club Books).

99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle. Center for Science in the Public Interest. (Anchor Press, 1977). 366 pp. Paperback: $3.50. Practical suggestions on organic gardening, more healthful food and clothing, energy conservation, product safety and community development that help to save money while using global resources responsibly.

The North American Bioregional Congress. David Haenke. In Context (Summer, 1983), pp. 32-34.

Original Blessing: A Primer in Creation Spirituality. Matthew Fox. (Sante Fe, New Mexico: Bear & Company, 1983), 348 pp. $10.95. Explores creation-centered spirituality as the basis for wisdom and survival.

Person/Planet. Theodore Roszak. (Doubleday).

Pilgrim at Tinker Creek. Annie Dillard. (Harper).

Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith. Walter Brueggemann. (Philadelphia: Fortren Press, 1977), 228 pp. $5.95.

The Power In the Land: An Inquiry Into Unemployment, the Profits Crisis and Land Speculation. Fred Harrison. (New York: Universe Books, 1983), 318 pp.

Progress for a Small Planet. Barbara Ward. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979). Solid economics and many hopeful examples, from a committed internationalist and defender of the futures of the poor nations.

Protecting Agricultural Land: Minnesota's Ag-Stravaganza. Developed by Laura Noy for the Governor's Council on Rural Development. A set of curriculum materials for use in grades K- 6 dealing with soil conservation and wise use of land. Includes teaching activities, hand-out sheets, lesson plans, resource guide. Excellent. Free. Write Governor's Council on Rural Development, 9th Floor American Center Building, 150 East Kellogg Boulevard, St. Paul, MN, 55101.

Reinhabiting Cities and Towns. George Tukel and John Todd. (San Francisco: Drum Foundation).

The Resettling of America. Gary Coates. (Andover: Brick Publishing Co., 1981).

Riverdale Papers, (Volumes 1-15). Thomas Berry. Mimeo collections of essays largely on themes of earth spirituality. Write Riverdale Center for Religious Studies, 5801 Palisades Ave., Bronx, N.Y., 10471.

Rural Gleanings. Quarterly publication of Christian Rural Research and Resource Service, c/o Lester and Marion Settle, R.R. 1, Debert, Nova Scotia, BOM 1GO. No charge— donations helpful. Its purpose is to assist rural people and churches in becoming more effective witnesses to surrounding communities.

The Sacred Pipe. Joseph Epes Brown. (Penguin).

Small Is Beautiful: Economics As If People Mattered. E. F. Schumacher. (Harper and Row, 1973), $3.75. Calls for a human scale technology and keeping "humans in touch with living nature."

Soil and Cultivation. Edward Hyams. (Harper Torchbook).

The Spirit of the Earth: A Theology of the Land. John Hart. (New York: Paulist Press, 1984). John Hart directed the heartland project which resulted in *Strangers and Guests*, the Midwest Bishops' statement on the land and rural values. Sets forth Catholic theology and ethics in relation to the land.

State of the World. Lester R. Brown, project director, and Linda Starke, editor. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1985). A Worldwatch Institute report on progress toward a sustainable society. Excellent source of information on environmental and other concerns.

Taking Charge of Our Lives: Living Responsibly in the World. John Bodner, editor. (American Friends Service Committee, New Edition, 1983). 256 pp. $9.95. An AFSC handbook that demonstrates concretely how one can put concerns for a better life and world into effect through everyday decisions about food, shelter, work, children, money, clothing, community, gift-giving, energy use, the elderly and more.

Tao of Physics. Fritjof Capra. (Shambhala, 1975.)

The Universe is a Green Dragon: A Cosmic Creation Story. Brian Swimme. (Santa Fe: Bear & Company, 1985), 171 pp, $8.95. The author, a physicist, explores the creative force and interrelatedness of all matter and addresses the need to revision nature as being the breath and pulse of the Creator.

Voluntary Simplicity. Duane Elgin. (Morrow Publishers).

Walden. Henry Thoreau.

Wilderness and the American Mind. Rodney Nash. (Yale University Press).

The Wilderness World of John Muir. Vincent W. Teale. (Haughton Mifflin Publishers).

Worldly Spirituality: A Call to Take Care of the Earth. Wes Grandberg-Michaelson. (New York: Harper and Row, 1982). 224 pp. $12.00. Summons Christians to "global sanctification" to care for and heal the earth. ■

BEST COPY AVAILABLE